

SYSTEM AND SERVICES FOR HANDLING COMPUTING ENVIRONMENTS AS DOCUMENTS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for describing computing environments as electronic documents,
5 programs or other types of electronic representation or data. The environment description
can be easily created, transferred and ultimately used to create the specified environment for
use by an end user, or users, in many different applications. The invention provides
abstraction software and a user interface to allow a human user to specify a definition for the
computing environment. Desired components are selected and included in the environment
10 definition. Default components can be provided to help a user design a viable environment.
Hardware and software components can also be associated with constraints so that, for
example, incompatible components such as software that can not run on different central
processing units, under certain operating systems, etc., will not be selected. Abstraction
software can also use parameters to associate additional qualities, restrictions or properties
15 with components. Environment definitions can be stored and transferred in a manner
compatible with typical electronic information. Copies of definitions can be made.
Definitions can be viewed by application programs, browsers, etc. Definitions can be edited
by users with similar types of software, or with other, dedicated software. Environment
definitions can be installed onto hardware and software resources by installation software.
20 Environments can be installed on specific components from which the environment was
originally abstracted, or on other sufficiently similar components. Environments can be
remotely manipulated and accessed from computers, terminals, web browsers, handheld
devices, or other devices. Various services can be provided, or implemented, with the system
of the present invention. Examples of services include allowing interactive selection and
25 loading of environments, uploading previously saved environments for storage and future
use, replicating environments and distributing the environments as for a corporate-wide
deployment in several countries, etc.

SF 1231248 v1